CLAIM AMENDMENTS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended). A circuit, comprising [:] a program-controlled unit including an instruction execution pipeline having a plurality of pipeline stages[;], wherein:

said program-controlled unit ~~executing~~ is configured to execute pipeline instructions instructing said program-controlled unit to stop an individual one of said plurality of pipeline stages, more than one of said plurality of pipeline stages, or all of said plurality of pipeline stages without creating any conditions for which one pipeline stage, a plurality pipeline stages, or all pipeline stages are stopped; and

the pipeline instructions ~~stipulating~~ stipulate which particular one of said plurality of pipeline stages or which particular ones of said plurality of pipeline stages should be stopped.

Claim 2 (previously presented). The circuit according to claim 1, wherein said program-controlled unit executes at least one of said pipeline instructions specifying a length of time for which a respective one of said plurality of pipeline stages is to be stopped.

Claim 3 (previously presented). The circuit according to claim 1, wherein the instructions, which instruct stopping, or other instructions stipulate a length of time for which a respective one of said plurality of pipeline stages is to be stopped.

Claim 4 (previously presented). The circuit according to claim 1, wherein said program-controlled unit begins to stop a respective one of said plurality of pipeline stages at a particular time after executing an instruction that instructs stopping.

Claim 5 (previously presented). The circuit according to claim 1, wherein said program-controlled unit begins to stop a respective one of said plurality of pipeline stages after an instruction that instructs stopping has passed through said instruction execution pipeline.

Claim 6 (previously presented). The circuit according to claim 1, wherein said program-controlled unit sets a time at which a respective one of said plurality of pipeline stages will begin to be stopped.

Claim 7 (previously presented). The circuit according to claim 1, wherein the pipeline instructions, which instruct stopping, or other instructions stipulate a time for beginning to stop a respective one of said plurality of pipeline stages.

Claim 8 (currently amended). The circuit according to claim 1, wherein, during normal operation, said program-controlled unit ~~blocks~~ is configured to block execution of the pipeline instructions, which instruct stopping.

Claim 9 (currently amended). ~~The circuit according to claim 8, wherein~~

A circuit, comprising a program-controlled unit including an instruction execution pipeline having a plurality of pipeline stages, wherein:

said program-controlled unit is configured to execute pipeline instructions instructing said program-controlled unit to stop an individual one of said plurality of pipeline stages, more than one of said plurality of pipeline stages, or all of said plurality of pipeline stages without creating any conditions for which one pipeline stage, a plurality pipeline stages, or all pipeline stages are stopped;

the pipeline instructions stipulate which particular one of said plurality of pipeline stages or which particular ones of said plurality of pipeline stages should be stopped;

during normal operation, said program-controlled unit is configured to block execution of the pipeline instructions, which instruct stopping; and

said program-controlled unit ~~treats~~ is configured to treat the pipeline

instructions, which instruct stopping, as unknown instructions when execution

of the pipeline instructions, which instruct stopping, is not enabled.

Claim 10 (new). The circuit according to claim 1, wherein said program-

controlled unit is configured to execute the pipeline instructions in a testing

and/or initialization mode of operation and to block execution of the pipeline

instructions in a mode of operation in which said program-controlled unit is not

being tested and/or initialized.